

16
A
PARALLEL

BETWEEN

MUHAMED *and* SOSEM,

THE

Great DELIVERER of the JEWS.

BY

ZELIM MUSULMAN.

In a LETTER to

NATHAN RABBY.

*Non ne satius est Pecudum more vivere, quam
DEUM tam impium, tam prophanum, tam
sanguinarium colere?*

Lactant. Divin. Inst. lib. 1. cap. 21.

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**For the Information of
the READER;**

IT was thought proper to give
some preliminary Account of
the following Epistle, which
is now presented to the Pub-
lick; not but those who shall peruse it
with an impartial Eye, will undoubt-
edly agree, by the Simplicity of the
Style, that it wants no farther Inter-
pretation.

However, as many perhaps may ima-
gine this Work to be a meer Fiction,
forg'd only by some evil-minded IN-

FIDEL, in order to strike at the Foundation of most Religions, by extenuating the Merits of that renowned Legislator of Antiquity, and the great Supporter of it ; I find myself under a necessity to obviate this Prepossession, by informing my Readers, that the Author, far from being a Man bigotted to his Religion, or an Enthusiast mischievously inclin'd, is on the contrary one, who is actuated by no other Motive, but the pure Love of Truth ; for the discovery of which, he daily labours with his utmost Efforts, by making a sincere and unbiass'd Enquiry into the different Opinions of Men concerning the Deity ; which, if consistent with the Attributes of that supreme Being, he pays due Veneration to them, as grounded upon Truth : But on the other hand, should he find them repugnant to those very Attributes,

tributes, he entirely abhors them, as being the Offsprings of Falshood.

Pursuant to this excellent Maxim, he has made a strict Enquiry, both into his own Religion, and that of the Jews; whereupon he has freely and genuinely communicated his Thoughts to this Rabby, who for a long time had endeavour'd to bring him over to the Jewish Religion. It was not the Musulman's Intention, that his Opinion upon this matter should be spread in the World, having desired Nathan not to let any one peruse his Letter; but this Jew, who is a plain honest Man, tho' prodigiously obstinate in his Belief, being in some measure startled, at the Force of his Antagonist's Reasonings, and unwilling to appear himself in the Publication of them, he intrusted me with
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the Management of it, being desirous to be well inform'd what might be the Opinion of the Learned concerning this important Subject, before he either departed from his own Principles, or determin'd in favour of those which this Mahometan Doctor had made known to him.

The Account Zelim has given of Sosem, appears very just and conformable to the Traditions of the Jews. It is true, he thought it convenient to disguise some particular Names in his Letter, for which Licence, he has offer'd substantial Reasons to the Rabby; as for instance, where our Author mentions the Plagues of Egypt; amongst others, instead of that of Frogs, he calls it the Plague of Toads: For our Musulman says, and not without probability,

probability, that had the Egyptians had as nice a taste in eating as a Frenchman, an Italian, or a Spaniard, who are generally served with a dish of Frogs in their politest Entertainments, they would have chearfully receiv'd that Plague, rather as a Blessing from Heaven, than an Affliction sent to punish them; and after a Shower of Frogs, would have feasted most elegantly: Whereas, a Shower of Toads would have proved a real Plague to them, as being poisonous both to Men and Beasts. And indeed, 'tis my Opinion, the Word Frog instead of Toad, seems to be a mistaken Expression, inserted by the Hebrew Interpreters: For why may not this Notion bear as good a face of Truth with it, as that which the great and Learned Dr. B——t——y has lately given us in his
fine

*fine Edition of Milton, wherein he im-
 puts the Errors and Mistakes in the
 former Editions, to the Ignorance of
 those who transcribed the Works of that
 celebrated Poet? Farewell.*

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VENERABLE NATHAN,

IN the last Conference I had with thee on the subject of Religion, thou didst tell me, thou wouldst no more dispute with me, unless I divested myself of those Prepossessions, which I had imbib'd in favour of the Alcoran, and the Traditions of our *Hodgias**: For, according to thy Notion, it was impossible to learn the Truth, from such as had an Interest to conceal it. Thou didst tell me also, that it was not right to embrace any Opinion, without first trying it by Reason, and that we ought to

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* A Name given to the Divines in *Turkey*.

believe all things, only in proportion to their Probability and Possibility ; for if we suffer'd our Faith to be the sole Director and Governour of our Understanding, we should easily be brought to assent to the most monstrous Absurdities and grossest Falsities, and look upon them as the most incontestable Truths.

W H A T E V E R thou hast said to me on this head, appeareth so reasonable, that I resolv'd to examine and try my Religion by thy Principles. I flatter myself, that this tryal of my own Religion will not be disagreeable to thee, and when I have finish'd it, I hope thou wilt permit me to take the same liberty in inquiring into thine. 'Tis a Privilege which thou hast allow'd to be my Right, so that thou canst not be displeas'd with me; unless thou art like most *Priests*, who are very ready and willing to give all Liberty and Encouragement to enquire into, and detect the
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Impostures of others ; but will by no means suffer us to make the least Examination into their own : The reason of this very unjust Proceeding, *Nathan*, is, they would gladly erect their own Dominion upon the ruin of others, but are very unwilling to be so serv'd themselves.

THEREFORE I present thee with the History of our *Legislator*, and the Religion he establish'd among the *Arabs*, taken from those Authors, which can be least suspected of Partiality.

EIGHT Hundred and Eighty-one Years after the famous Victory, which *Alexander* obtained over *Darius* at *Arbelles*, in the Reign of *Kosrou* King of *Persia* ; *Muhamed*, Son of *Abdallah* and *Eminah*, was born at *Meccah*, at break of day, on the eighth of the first Month *Rabie* ; or, according to the

Christiau Æra, on the ninth of *April*, 571 *. *Eminah* had been a Widow two Months, when she brought forth *Muhamed* into the World ; his Grandfather by the Father's side, was obliged to take care of his Mother and him, and preserve them from Want : for all their Substance consisted in a few Cattle, which maintained the whole Family. Although the Father of *Muhamed* was poor, he was of the Tribe of *Koreish*, the most noble and distinguish'd among the *Arabs* †.

ABDOLMUTLEB provided this Infant with a Nurse, whose Name was *Halimah*, Native of *Saad*, in the Desert, where he was brought up till he was six Years old ; at which time, she return'd him to his Mother, who died a little while after ; and the Orphan remain'd in the

* Ex Elmakino Hiftor. Saracen. apud Hottinger. Hiftor. Orient. lib. i. cap. 6.

† Ex Elmakino, apud Hottinger. lib. i. cap. 4.

the House of his Grandfather, so long as he liv'd : After his Death, *Muhamed* being then eight Years old, went to live with his Uncle *Abutaleb*, to whom *Abdolmutleb* had confided the care of his Education *.

ABUTALEB being delighted to see how greatly his Nephew profited by his Instructions, and observing that he had more Gravity, a greater Sagacity and Discernment than were ordinarily found in Children of his Age, thought it proper for him to travel, in order not only to cultivate and improve those excellent Talents, which Nature had bestow'd on him ; but also, that he might by Traffick get a Sufficiency, to enable him to marry, at his return into his own Country : for his Uncle was in no condition to give him a Fortune.

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* Ex Elmakino, apud Hottinger. lib. 2. cap. 1.

To accomplish this, *Abutaleb* and *Atecha* his Wife, concluded together, to recommend him to the Service of *Chadigah*, the Widow of an eminent Merchant at *Meccah*, named *Abdumenas*, who had left her prodigiously rich : She was a Woman of strict Religion, and good Morals ; so that *Abutaleb* and *Atecha* were greatly rejoic'd, believing, that *Muhamed* could not fail of the Blessing of God, while he was under the Patronage of *Chadigah*. Being thus admitted into her Service, he was appointed to look after her Camels, and went with these Animals to all the maritime Cities on the South side of *Arabia*, to bring from thence such Merchandizes, as were proper to be dispos'd of in *Syria* : But more especially Silks, of which the Luxury of *Constantinople* occasion'd a great Consumption.

MUHAMED, during the whole course of his Traffick, had always behav'd himself in so disinterested a manner, and render'd such just and exact Accounts to his Mistress, that she could not help conceiving a great Esteem for a Man, whose Faithfulness and Integrity shone forth in the midst of Adversity. He was then in the Bloom of his Age, and though his Person had nothing extraordinary in it; his pleasing Countenance, the Vivacity of his Looks, and that graceful Modesty, which accompanied all his Actions, had made such Impressions on the mind of *Chadigab*, that she became passionately in love with him, and from being her Servant, made him her Husband*; preferring him to the wealthiest Merchants of *Arabia*, who had used their utmost Endeavours, to obtain so great a Happiness.

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* Ex Abunazaro; de Pseudoprophet. Muhamed. lib. 2. apud Hotting. lib. 2. cap. 1.

MUHAMED being married, made it his constant Care and Employment, either out of Inclination or Gratitude, to be every way agreeable to his dear Benefactress. They lived many Years together in a perfect Union, and their days were attended with reciprocal marks of the greatest Tendernefs, and sincerest Affection : But after they had been married fifteen Years, *Muhamed* being subject to the Falling-Sickness, and then at the age of Forty ; his Fits returned oftner, and continued much longer, than when he was in the Vigour of Youth. These Fits, I say, and the Idea of so terrible a Distemper, made *Chadigah* almost repent that she had married him ; and if the Esteem and Friendship she had for her Husband did not entirely grow cold on this account, at least his Careffes became disgusting and insupportable to her. *Muhamed*, whose Penetration was deep, could not be long before

before he perceived this extraordinary Change ; and as he was a Man of the greatest Delicacy, it griev'd him exceedingly, to see himself despis'd by a Woman, who once even ador'd him : and what made it still the more vexatious to him, was, that he had not incurr'd her Disdain by any voluntary Offence ; but meerly by a Misfortune, which might befall the best of Men.

THEREFORE, in order to retrieve the Esteem and Affection of *Chadigah*, and his other Wives, which he had lost, only by a Frailty so common with the Female Sex ; *Muhamed* thought the best thing he could do, was to persuade them, that what they call'd a dreadful Disease, or an Attack of the Epilepsy, was a real Extasy, into which he was transported by the sudden Appearance of Angels, who surrounded him, at which time, the Archangel *Gabriel* used to reveal himself, and make known to

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him the Secrets of God: That being unable to bear the Brightness, and great Glory of this Heavenly Messenger, it threw him into these holy Convulsions, as it had done all the Prophets before him*.

'Twas by this Method the crafty *Arab* conceal'd his Indisposition from his Wives; and from this trivial Invention it was, that the *Muhamedan* Religion took its Foundation, which hath since caused such great Revolutions in the World.

FOR, whether *Chadigah* did really believe all that her Husband communicated to her concerning his Revelations, or only pretended to give credit to them to indulge her Ambition, I shall not determine: However, she was the first, who declared publicly, that *Muhamed*

* Zonaras Annalium, apud Hotting. lib. 1. cap. 2. & lib. 2. cap. 3.

hamed held a Communication with Angels, and all that he thought or spoke, was immediately inspired by the Most High. In short, *Chadigah*, *Zeid*, *Aly*, and some others whom *Muhamed* had engaged in his Interest, labour'd incessantly, and with all their Might, to procure him Converts and Disciples ; which they effected with so much Success, that it alarm'd the Magistracy of *Meccah*, who immediately gave orders for the apprehending this new Prophet, that he might be put to death ; but *Muhamed* being inform'd thereof, flew to *Medina*, where he was soon follow'd by his Adherents *.

THIS Divine Apostle, seeing the Number of his Disciples was much increased, resolv'd to raise himself by their Credulity ; and, by open Force, establish his Religion and Authority amongst the *Arabs*. To accomplish this,

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* Ex Elmakino, apud Hotting. lib. 2. cap. 4.

he gave the Standard of his Faith to his Grandfather *Hamza*, and sent him with thirty of his Disciples, or *Musulmen*, to try their Fortune; but they met with no Opportunity, to exercise their Valour against the Infidels.

IN the second Year of the *Hegira*, *Muhamed* made another Expedition, which prov'd very fortunate: He put himself at the head of three Hundred and nineteen *Musulmen*, and attack'd on *Friday* the seventeenth Day of the Month *Ramadan*, a very rich Caravan, of nine Hundred, or a Thousand *Koreishites*, whereof he kill'd Seventy, and took the rest Prisoners; for at that time God fought for *Muhamed*, as he formerly had done for *Sofem* *.

THIS

* *Muhamed*, in order to inspire Courage in his Soldiers, told them, that God fought for them; for which reason, twenty *Musulmen* might fight two Hundred Infidels, and be able to overcome them.

THIS famous Battle was fought near a Well named *Badr* in *Arabia*: *Muhammed* in the Engagement lost fourteen *Musulmen*, who had the Glory of being the first Martyrs of his Religion*. The Booty was very considerable, and it so greatly encouraged *Muhammed*, that after many

them. [See the eighth Chapter of the *Alcoran*.] *Sofem* also speaketh after the same manner unto the Children of *Rael*, saying; Hear, O *Rael*, you approach this day unto Battle against your Enemies: Let not your Hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them: For the Lord your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your Enemies, to save you. [Deu. cap. 20. v. 3, 4.] This good Expedient hath been, and is to this day used by all Nations. *Bayle* gives us a reason for it, in his *Miscellaneous Thoughts upon Comets*, chap. 131. As also *Machiavel* in his Discourse upon *Titus Livius*, lib. 3. cap. 13. and 33.

* Ex Musulminis vero tanquam Martyres occubuerant viri 14. Habent enim Muhamedani Martyrum loco, quotquot in proeliis Religionis causa susceptis mactantur, &c. ex Elmakino, apud Hottinger. lib. 2. cap. 4.

many other Expeditions, much more remarkable than this, he at last made himself master of *Meccah*, in the eighth Year of his Flight, or of the *Hegira*; and three Years after, on *Monday* the second Day * of the first Month *Rabie*, he died of a Sickness, which held him thirteen Days, and was buried at *Medina*, being then in the sixty-third Year of his Age; *Abubeker* reigning over the *Sarazens*, and *Heraclius* over the *Greeks*: He left only one Daughter, named *Phatema*, who did not survive her Father above forty, tho' some say seventy Days †.

MUHAMED in his Person was well set, and of a middle Size; he had a large Head, a swarthy Complexion, tho' of a lively Colour, with a modest Look; his Body was free and easy, his Address

* According to *Elmakin*, he died the twelfth Day of the same Month.

† *Ex Patricide*, apud *Hotting*. lib. 2. cap. 4.

Address obliging and civil, his Conversation insinuating, his Understanding fine and courtly : he was eloquent, hardy, and contemn'd those Dangers, which others generally fear. This is the Picture of our glorious Apostle, drawn by a *Christian**, who being his Enemy, can no wise be thought to have flattered him.

I appeal to thee, *Nathan*! Have I not given thee a very impartial Account of my Prophet? Thou canst not charge me now with having tired thy Patience with infinite Quotations from the *Alcoran*, as was my custom formerly, when I disputed with thee: Nor have I troubled thee with relating all the Miracles, which, according to what our *Hodgias* and † *Imans* say, preceeded his Birth; || nor
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* Chevreau Hist. du Monde, liv. 5. chap. 1.

† *Iman* is the first Priest of one of our Mosques, much like unto a Curate in his own Parish.

|| Ex Elmakino, apud Hottinger. lib 1. cap. 6.

with those which he wrought during his Life *, as astonishing, or rather as extravagant as those, that thou dost attribute to thy Prophet : For it was my design to entertain thee with Facts, and not with ridiculous Fictions.

I protest that I am infinitely obliged to thee, for having made me sensible of the Right I have to exercise my Reason freely, by the Assistance of which, I have been able to see beyond all my former Prejudices, and to attain the Knowledge of these Truths, I have here communicated to thee. But how is it possible, worthy *Nathan*, that thou, who hast so clearly open'd my Eyes, and made me see the Errors of my Education, should'st still be blind to thine own ?

THOU canst not forget how often thou hast told me, 'twas impossible that
God

* Hottinger. lib. 2. & Chevreau, lib. 5.

God should be the Author of the *Alcoran*, because it contain'd things entirely repugnant to his infinite Goodness and Wisdom. Thou must surely remember, 'twas thou taught me, that God was a Being altogether perfect and unchangeable, and consequently can never alter that wise, eternal Order, by which he governs the Universe; because that Order is perfect, and cannot be mended. If then these Notions of the Deity, which thou dost entertain, are just; and if it be true, that God can never do any thing contrary to his Attributes: How is it, and from what Motives wouldst thou persuade me to embrace thy Religion?

If thou hadst examin'd thy own System impartially, as I have done, thou wouldst find, it could never be the Offspring of the Divinity: Thou wouldst perceive and own, I say, that those frequent Conversations, which *Sofem* had

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with the supreme Being, are as absurd, and more contrary to true Piety, than those, which *Muhamed* held with the Archangel *Gabriel*.

THOU wouldst agree with me, that he who is all Goodness, could never command and approve that great Injustice, and severe Cruelties, which *Sossem* perpetrated in his Name: In short, thou wouldst be perfectly convinced, that he had imposed upon the *Jews*, as *Muhamed* had on the *Arabs*.

Now, I fear thou wilt forsake the calm Guidance of Reason; I greatly fear, thou wilt suffer thyself to be hurried into Rage and Fury, to hear me treat thy Prophet as an Impostor: But if thou dost, the Fault will be thine, and

and thy Actions quite contrary to thy Principles.

THOU canst not but call to mind, that thou hast a Thousand times, and in the most violent and outrageous manner, called *Muhamed* an Impostor, whom I revered as the best belov'd Messenger of God: I bore this without Anger, and wilt thou then be less cool, if I should now make Reprisals? To tell thee the Truth, thy Discourses have often confounded me, and fill'd me with Horror, so prophane, so impious did they seem to me; but my Prejudices were the Cause thereof.

SUFFER me then to tell thee, without Reserve, my Sentiments of *Sosem*, and hear me with as much Patience as I heard thee, when thou freely

spokest thine of *Muhamed*: In disputing with thee I will make use of no Weapons, but impartial Examination and just Reasoning; my Right to them thou hast already acknowledged. Therefore defend thyself if thou canst with the same Arms, and by no means let thy natural Good-humour depart from thee; for if thou dost, it will evidently prove, that thou art not able to answer my Objections by solid Arguments, and thy Rage will serve only to expose thy Weakness.

I will first give thee the History of *Sosem*, from a very judicious Author, and then will examine that fabulous one, which thou dost admire as a Divine Work; that thou mayst judge which of the two is the most reasonable, and most worthy of Assent.

IN one Account, saith he, a number of Writers concur; that when *Egypt* was over-run by a pestilent Disease, contaminating living Bodies *, and very foul to behold; *Bochoris* the King, applying for a Remedy to the Oracle of *Jupiter Hammon*, was ordered to purge his Kingdom, and to remove into another Country, that Generation of Men so detested by the Deities. Hence, when they were all searched out, and the Multitude swept together, carried into the immense Desarts, and there abandoned: whilst all continued wailing under Astonishment and Despair; *Sossem*, one of these Exiles, exhorted them to entertain no hopes of Relief from Gods or Men, since both by Gods and Men they had been forsaken; but in himself

* Leprosy.

himself to trust, as to a Leader sent from Heaven, one by whose Aid they should vanquish their present Misery and Distress.

THEY assented, and utterly ignorant of whatever was to befall them, began to journey on at random; but nothing aggrieved them so sorely as want of Water. Already they were lying scattered over the Plains, ready to perish; when a Flock of wild Asses, leaving their Pasture, climbed up a rocky Mountain, covered with a thick Wood. *Sofem* followed them, forming a Conjecture from the singular Verdure of the Herbage, and there discovered some large Springs. This proved their Solacement and Relief; and travelling for six Days, without intermission, on the seventh they gained a Settlement,

element, by exterminating the Inhabitants. There they raised their City, there founded and dedicated their Temple.

JOSEM, to ensure the Subjection of the Nation to himself for ever, established religious Ordinances altogether new, and opposite to those of all other Men and Countries*.

THUS thou seest in what manner *Sosem* and his People went out of *Egypt*. Tell me, *Nathan*, if this Account from *Tacitus*, prophane as thou dost call it, is not more probable, than that which is deliver'd to thee in *Doxeus*,
and

* Here I have taken the liberty to quote this Passage from the excellent Translation of *Tacitus*, by Mr. *Thomas Gordon*, which is the best extant. Vol. 2. pag. 303. Tacit. Histor. lib. 5.

and thou esteamest sacred? It is no wife burthen'd with Fiction, or darken'd with Miracles; in one word, it is natural, and if it be not the true History of thy People, it has nevertheless nothing impossible in it.

FAR unlike is that Relation, to which thou dost pay so sacred a Regard: Thine is, if I may speak plainly, a Collection of Fables, wretchedly invented, without Connection or Order, as extravagant as they are impious; and consequently as shocking to Human Understanding, as they are contrary to the Divine Being.

FOR these Reasons, *Nathan*, I maintain that the Account given by *Tacitus* doth reflect more Glory on *Sosem*, and more Honour on the *Jewish Nation*, than

than that of *Doxeus* : For, what Breast is there that would not feel Compassion for a wretched People, banish'd their Country, and miserably afflicted with the Leprosy ? Who is the Man, that would not give due Honour to *Sofsem* for his Wisdom and Goodness, in comforting and reanimating his Companions, who, depress'd with the Load of so many Misfortunes, had lost all Courage, and would have inevitably perish'd, had not he arose to their Deliverance, and enliven'd them with Hopes ?

It is true, *Sofsem* deceived them, making them believe, that he was a *Guide* sent from *Heaven*, that they might submit themselves to him : But was it not better for that miserable People to become subject to some one, who could assist them in their present Afflictions,

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flitions, than to die enraged against *God* and *Men*, for want of Succour ?

IT is said also, that *Sosem* invaded a Country ; where, after having exterminated the Inhabitants, he made a Settlement for himself, and his People : This must be acknowledg'd to have been great Injustice and Cruelty ; but all this is nothing, to what thou art going to hear ; give good Attention thereunto, and I am sure thou wilt never more solicit me to be a *Jew*.

DOXEUS then giveth us the following Description : That God gave unto *Sosem* Power to work Miracles before *Bochoris*, in order that this *Egyptian*, being made sensible of his Omnipotence, he might let the *Jews* go out of *Egypt* ; but at the same time, had
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harden'd the Heart of this *King* ; that is, had taken from him the power of granting, what he had order'd *Sofem* to demand in his *Name* * : So that *Bochoris* three times refused *Sofem* and his Brother *Nakor* to let the People go ; for *God* would have it so, having harden'd his Heart † ; notwithstanding which, *God* punish'd him severely, as if he had been culpable, changing the Water of *Egypt* into a reddish Slime ; covering the Land, and filling the Houses of the *Egyptians* with *Toads* ‡ . It is not amiss to remark here, that all the People of *Egypt* were afflicted with these Plagues, and forc'd to share in the Misery, though they were not at all inform'd of what pass'd between their *King* and *Sofem*.

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GOD

* Dox. cap. 4. v. 21.

† Dox. cap. 5. v. 1, 2. & cap. 7. v. 2, 3, 4.

‡ Dox. cap. 8. v. 3, 6.

GOD sent *Sofem* a fourth time unto *Bochoris*, to acquaint him, that if he did not let the *Jews* depart, he would fill *Egypt* with *Butterflies* of every kind, which should infect all the Country *. The *King*, who had already found, by severe Experience, the Power of the God of *Rael*, sent for *Sofem* and *Nahor*; and promised them, that they and their People should go and sacrifice to their God, if they would save him from the Plague of *Butterflies* †. Poor afflicted *Bochoris* gave this Permission unto *Sofem* with great Joy, thinking to escape the Evil that he threatned him with: But God hinder'd him from fulfilling his Intention, by hardning his Heart again; so *Sofem* dispers'd the
 Plague

* Dox. cap. 8. v. 21.

† Ibid. v. 25, 28.

Plague of *Butterflies*, to no purpose ;
for the *King* was disabled from keeping
his Word *.

THUS did *God* continue to harden
the Heart of *Bochoris* †, that he might
more obstinately refuse, what *He* had
order'd *Sosem* to demand of him ; and
this for the cruel Satisfaction of afflic-
ting him a long time, and with variety
of Miseries ‖.

AT last, *God* being almost weary of
tormenting this unfortunate *Prince*, said
unto *Sosem*, that *He* would smite him
with but one Plague more ; after that,
he would let the People of *Rael* go out
of *Egypt* ‡. Having then as usual har-
den'd

* Ibid. v. 32.

† Dox. cap. 9. v. 12.

‖ Ibid. v. 24, 25. cap. 10. v. 12, 13, 14, 15, 20

27.

‡ Dox. cap. 11. v. 1.

den'd the Heart of *Bochoris*, so that he refused to let the *Jews* depart, *God* smote him with this last Plague, that *He* might punish him for a Disobedience, of which *Himself* was the Cause.

BUT now, *Nathan*, remark well what *Sosem* maketh *God* to say, and thou wilt be more and more convinc'd of the false Idea, that he had of the *Eternal Being*. Thou hast seen already, that he hath represented the *Deity* unjust and cruel, and now he maketh him ignorant also.

I will pass this Night, saith *God*, through the Land of *Egypt*, and I will smite all the first born, both Man and Beast: The Blood, with which you shall mark your Houses, shall distinguish you from the *Egyptians*; for when I shall

see that Blood, I will kill no Person in that House: By this means, shall you escape the Stroke of Death, with which I will smite all the Land *.

OBSERVE this, *Nathan*, thy *God*, fearing in this *Massacre*, that *He* should slay the *Jew* with the *Egyptian*, because they dwelt one among another, was forced to have the Houses of the *Hebrews* mark'd with Blood, lest *He* should mistake. Such an Expedient as this might have been necessary to an *Affassin*, liable to err; but it was by no means consistent with the *Infallibility* of a *God*, who knows all things, and cannot be deceived. What strange, what horrid Notions of *Deity* are these!

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* Dox. cap. 12. v. 12, 13.

THE unhappy and innocent *Bochoris*, after this bloody Plague, having his Heart no more harden'd, order'd *Sofem* and *Nabor* to come before him, and said to them; rise up, and get you forth from amongst my People, both you, and the Children of *Rael*; go, and sacrifice unto your *God*: Take with you your Oxen and your Sheep, and when you are departed from me, pray unto your *God* for me *.

THUS the *King*, as soon as *God* permitted, let the People freely go; but the *Holy Prophet*, not liking to depart with empty hands, commanded the

* Thy Prophet here giveth himself the Lye; for a little before he had said unto *Bochoris*, that he would never see him more, [*Dox.* cap. 10. v. 29.] and nevertheless, he afterwards came again into his Presence, *Dox.* cap. 12. v. 31, 32.

the *Jews*, by Authority from *God*, to borrow of their best Friends amongst the *Egyptians*, their Vessels of Gold and Silver, and the richest of their Garments, and to carry them away with them: The *Jews* obey'd readily, and then departed with *Sosem* out of *Egypt* *.

I defy thee, *Nathan*, to find me in all the *Alcoran* one Passage, wherein *God* hath ever commanded *Musulmen* to commit so perfidious a Robbery.

NOTWITHSTANDING all this, *Bochoris* and his People thought themselves blest, that they had got rid of so terrible a Plague; but their Happiness was of very short Duration: For *God*, who had resolv'd to sacrifice to his

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Rage,

* Dox. cap. 11. v. 2. & cap. 12. v. 35, 36.

Rage, this *King* and his innocent Subjects, harden'd again the Hearts of *Bochoris*, and of the *Egyptians*, that they might pursue the *Jews*, and bring them back into *Egypt* *; so that *King* and his People, being forced to obey the *All-Powerful*, follow'd the *Hebrews*; but *God* stopped them, and drowned them in the Sea †.

THUS endeth this excellent *Tragedy*; and the *God* of *Sossem*, by an unheard of Injustice, made his Power known to the Children of *Rael* ‖.

I am very certain, *Nathan*, that if this History, which I have given thee, had been found in the *Alcoran*, or in the

* Dox. cap. 14. v. 4. 8. 17.

† Ibid. v. 26, & seq.

‖ Ibid. v. 31.

the *Gospel*, thou wouldst stand in no need of any Person to show thee the Extravagance, Impossibility and Impiety thereof; for I know no man of more excellent Discernment, and better Distinction in the most abstruse Cases, where thou art at liberty to use thy Reason, and follow the Light of thy Judgment: But as this Account unfortunately happeneth to be in a *Book*, which thou darest not to examine, nor call any thing thereof in question, looking upon it throughout, as *sacred* and indisputable; I think it my Duty to place this relation before thee in another light, if possible, to render thee sensible of thy Blindness.

IMAGINE then with thyself, that there is an *Island*, wherein liveth a *King* so powerful, that his Subjects are obliged

to perform all his Commands, either agreeable or disagreeable. This *King*, resolving to live in some other Part of his Kingdom, embarketh with a fleet of fifty Sail of Men of War, with very few Attendants; Being put out to sea, within a small distance from the *Island*, it cometh into his mind to have all his Lords and Officers of his Court with him.

To this end, he sendeth an Order unto the *Governour* of the *Island*, whereby he requireth that his Court should immediately attend him: His *Minister* obeyeth his Order, and when they are just ready to depart, he doth secretly dispatch a Counter-Order unto the *Governour*, not to let them go. Notwithstanding which, the *King* is impatient, and highly displeased, that his Court is
not

not come to join him: He blameth the *Governour* exceedingly, and threateneth to have both his Arms broke, if he doth not make his Court depart instantly.

THE *Minister* is now going to execute the *King's* Command, when he receiveth a private Letter from his *Royal* Master, charging him by no means to perform his last Order: The *Governour*, according thereunto, retaineth the Court still in the *Island*. The next day, the *King* sendeth, and hath the *Governour's* Arms broken, and threateneth him also with breaking his Legs, if he doth not without delay make his Court come unto him.

THIS poor *Minister*, always faithful to the last Commands of his *Prince*, giveth Orders for the Court's Departure,
and

and accompanied them himself ; but on their way meeteth a Messenger from the *King*, to tell him, that *his Majesty* would not have them come : Obedient to this new Instruction, the *Governour* and the Nobles return to their Habitations.

THIS unfortunate *Minister* however had his Legs broke, and the *King* ordereth all the Inhabitants of the Island to be punish'd in the same manner ; none were exempted, but the Officers of his Court.

WHEN *his Majesty* had diverted himself for some time in this delightful manner, he sendeth an Express unto the *Governour*, that his Court should immediately imbarck on a Frigate, that lay ready in the Harbour, which was

executed accordingly. Scarce had they set sail, when the *King* dispatch'd another Messenger, ordering the *Governour* and all the Inhabitants, with all speed to follow his Court, and bring them back into the *Island*.

THIS good *Minister*, with his broken Arms and Legs, is yet obedient, and causeth himself to be carried in a Litter, and put on board an old shatter'd Ship; the unhappy People, in the same miserable Condition, employ all their Horses, Mules, Asses and other Beasts, to draw them upon *Chariots* on board a great number of small Barks, which lay along the Shoar, and in less than two Hours they came up with the Frigate, and the *King's* Fleet, that was not above six Miles distant.

THEY were going on board the Frigate, according to *his Majesty's* Command; when the *King*, seeing them approach, order'd his Admiral and the other Captains instantly to fire on the small Ship, wherein was the *Governour*; as also on the Barks, and to sink them all. Thus did this *most excellent King* destroy a whole Nation, that had been ever submissive to him, to display unto his Court the greatness of his Power.

THIS Fable, which I have related unto thee, *Nathan*, is so parallel, and has such a perfect resemblance with the foregoing, that it would be idle to offer any Explanation. I shall only say this unto thee, that if thou approvest the Actions of this King, as they are exactly

exactly like those which *Doxeus* ascribeth unto the *Most High*; thou wilt pronounce a very execrable Blasphemy: for thou dost utterly subvert the Justice, Goodness, and infinite Wisdom of the *Divine Being*; thou makest a most horrible Monster of the *Deity*.

Now, if thou dost condemn these Actions, as I have no doubt but thou wilt; how will it be possible for thee ever to believe, that *God*, infinitely wise, just and good, could commit the same Wickedness, and Injustice, or be possess'd with so cruel a Frenzy as that, which maketh the Guilt of this detestable *Monarch*?

SURELY, *sublime Nathan*, it would be better for thee to be an *Atheist*, than

to worship a *Being*, chargeable with such enormous Crimes and Iniquities; for Imperfections and Wickedness must certainly be more contrary to the Nature, more injurious to the Honour of the true *God*, than even the denying his Existence*.

I know, *Nathan*, that thou wilt reply unto me in justification of his Conduct, with regard to *Bochoris*, that *God* hath all Power, and may do what pleaseth him: But rest not thyself there, for even that Opinion is impious; it being impossible, that *God* should act any thing contradictory to his Attributes, and inconsistent with his infinite Perfections; as the most ingenious Apostle of *Na-*

* See what the learned Mr. *Bayle* has said on this Subject in his Miscellaneous Thoughts upon Comets, chap. 115, 117, 119, 120, 132. Idem, Continuation of his Thoughts, &c. chap. 76, 77.

Nazarus hath pretended; saying, that as the Potter hath Power over the Clay, to make what Vessels he pleaseth; so *God* hath like Power over his Creatures, and may do with them what he will; and he endeavoureth to authorize this Doctrine, by the Conduct of *God* to *Bochoris**.

BUT, good *Nathan*, this Doctrine is wicked and abominable; a particular Friend of mine hath entirely demonstrated the Heinousness and Impiety thereof†. I could wish thou wouldst read his Writings, they will afford thee a thousand times more Instruction, than I can possibly communicate in this Letter. I am sure, when thou hast read

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them,

* Ad Rom. cap. 9. v. 17, & seq.

† The Count of *Passerano*, in his Discourses Historical and Political; Discourse the third. This Work will speedily be publish'd.

them, thou wilt thank me for recommending them unto thee.

BESIDES, when *Sosem* was got out of *Egypt*, he exercis'd the greatest Cruelties towards many Nations; he was not satisfied with driving the Inhabitants out of their Country, and robbing them of all their Possessions; but with insatiate Slaughter unmercifully butcher'd them, sparing neither Woman nor Child; not even Infant's Innocence, or Virgin's Beauty and Modesty, could move his Compassion: This was the terrible Lot of the *Chananites**, *Amorites*†, *Midianites*‡, and many others§.

IN

* Nu. cap. 21. v. 3.

† Ibid. v. 24.

‡ Nu. cap. 31. v. 7, 17.

§ Idem, cap. 21. v. 33, & seq.

IN this respect, *Sosem* can never be compared to *Muhamed*: 'Tis true, the Introduction of their Religions was alike, as they were both the Offspring of their own Genius and Ambition, and as they both propagated them by force of Arms; with this very great Difference, that *Muhamed* acted like *Alexander* the Great in all his Conquests, and *Sosem* like unto the *Spaniards*.

FOR *Muhamed* received generously, and with open Arms, all who would submit to his Laws; he indeed put the obstinate to death, but he ever spar'd the innocent Blood of Women, Virgins and Infants. In short, he commanded his Followers never to disturb, but to treat as Brethren, all who would obey the *Alcoran**.

ON

* See Chapter the ninth of the *Alcoran*.

ON the contrary, *Sofem* slaughter'd whole Nations; without offering or accepting any Conditions of Mercy; as did those shocking, inhuman Monsters the *Spaniards*, when they fell upon the People of *Peru* and *Mexico**. Nay, *Sofem*, even just before his Death, order'd the *Hebrews*, in the name of *God*, to exterminate many more Nations†.

MOREOVER, excellent *Nathan*, my Prophet was a good Father to the *Muslimen*, as long as he liv'd; and *thine* was

* See Bartholomeo de las Casas Destruccion de las Indias.

† —of the Cities which thy God doth give thee, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth, but thou shalt utterly destroy them; namely, the *Hittites*, and the *Amorites*; the *Canaanites*, and the *Perizzites*; the *Hivites*, and the *Jebusites*; as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee. De. chap. 20. v. 16, 17. See also chap. 31. v. 3, 4, 5.

was a cruel and avaricious Tyrant to the
Jews : if thou canst yet doubt thereof,
I will prove it unto thee in another Letter.

IN the mean while, let this be to the
Honour and Glory of the true God,
and to the Confusion of these *Impostors*.

London, 23 of the Moon *Maharram*,
in the Year of the *Hegira* 1108.
and of Christ, 1731.

I am,

Thy Sincere Friend,

ZELIM MUSULMAN.

F I N I S.

1712
was a cruel and arbitrary Tyrant to the
People: it then came, yet doubtless
I will prove it more in another Part.

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In the mean while, let this be said
Honour and Glory of the true God,
and to the Conscience of the People.



I have so often seen
in the Year of the 1712
and of 1713.

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F I V I S

